

Kindly replace all the claims now pending with the following claims:

1.(currently amended) An encoded symbology scanner for ~~simultaneously~~ scanning the encoded symbology ~~on~~ from a number of articles each of which carries encoded ~~upon which~~ symbology ~~has been encoded~~, comprising:

- (a) support means for the symbology scanner for receiving a number of ~~one or more~~ articles upon which symbology has been encoded;
- (b) illumination means disposed to simultaneously illuminate all of the encoded symbology carried by all articles that are ~~together upon~~ so received by said support means;
- (c) imaging means disposed to simultaneously image all of the encoded symbology from all the said number of articles when so received ~~together~~ by said support means; and
- (d) decoding means for decoding the encoded symbology images.

2.(currently amended) The encoded symbology scanner of claim 1, wherein:

- (a) said support means includes transparent window means disposed to simultaneously receive a plurality of symbology encoded articles so that the encoded symbology may be disposed upon said window means and for illumination by said illumination means; and
- (b) said imaging means includes ~~[[a]]~~ CCD camera means disposed and lensed to simultaneously capture an image of all of the encoded symbology from the so received number of articles.

3.(currently amended) The encoded symbology scanner of claim 2, wherein:

- (a) said imaging means includes a plurality of said CCD camera means simultaneously operated but with each said CCD camera means disposed to capture ~~only a portion of the~~ encoded symbology from only a portion of the so received number of articles;
- (b) said decoding means functioning to decode the symbology for each of said portions and to assemble the so decoded symbology into a stream of decoded data.

4.(previously presented) The encoded symbology scanner of claim 3, wherein: there are four CCD camera means each disposed to capture a quarter of the encoded symbology.

5.(previously presented) The encoded symbology scanner of claim 4, wherein: the encoded symbology is different for each article with encoded symbology.

6.(previously presented) The encoded symbology scanner of claim 5, wherein: the articles to be encoded are test tubes or vials disposed in a predetermined array in a rack means.

7.(currently amended) An encoded symbology scanner for ~~simultaneously~~ scanning the encoded symbology on ~~from~~ a number of articles each of which carries encoded ~~upon which~~ symbology ~~has been encoded~~, comprising:

- (a) a support for the scanner for receiving a number of ~~one or more~~ articles upon which symbology has been encoded;
- (b) an illumination assembly disposed to simultaneously illuminate all of the encoded symbology carried by all articles that are so received by ~~together upon~~ said support;
- (c) an imaging device disposed to simultaneously image all of the encoded symbology from all the said number of articles when so received ~~together~~ by said support; and
- (d) a decoder for decoding the encoded symbology images.

8.(currently amended) The encoded symbology scanner of claim 7, wherein:

- (a) said support includes a transparent window disposed to simultaneously receive a plurality of symbology encoded articles so that the encoded symbology may be disposed upon said window and for illumination by said illumination assembly; and
- (b) said imaging device includes a CCD camera disposed and lensed to simultaneously capture an image of all of the encoded symbology from all of the so received number of articles.

9.(currently amended) The encoded symbology scanner of claim 8, wherein:

- (a) said imaging device includes a plurality of said CCD cameras simultaneously operated but with each said CCD camera disposed to capture ~~only a portion of the~~ encoded symbology from only a portion of the so received number of articles;

(b) said decoder functioning to decode the symbology for each of said portions and to assemble the so decoded symbology into a stream of decoded data.

10.(previously presented) The encoded symbology scanner of claim 9, wherein: there are four CCD cameras each disposed to capture a quarter of the encoded symbology.

11.(previously presented) The encoded symbology scanner of claim 10, wherein: the encoded symbology is different for each article with encoded symbology.

12.(previously presented) The encoded symbology scanner of claim 11, wherein: the articles to be encoded are test tubes or vials disposed in a predetermined array in a rack.

13.(currently amended) A process for scanning encoded symbology from a number of articles upon which symbology has been encoded, comprising:

- (a) positioning a plurality of articles upon which symbology has been encoded for simultaneous decoding imaging;
- (b) simultaneously illuminating all of the encoded symbology for all of such articles;
- (c) simultaneously imaging all of the encoded symbology so ~~disposed~~ positioned; and
- (d) decoding the encoded symbology images.

14.(previously presented) The symbology scanning process of claim 13, including:

- (a) providing and disposing a transparent window to simultaneously receive a plurality of symbology encoded articles; and
- (b) simultaneously imaging means all of the encoded symbology for the articles with a CCD camera disposed and lensed to simultaneously capture an image of all of the encoded symbology.

15.(previously presented) The symbology scanning process of claim 14, including[;] :

- (a) employing a plurality of said CCD cameras to simultaneously image the encoded symbology but with each said CCD camera disposed to capture ~~only a portion of the~~ encoded symbology from only a portion of the articles;
- (b) decoding the symbology for each of said portions and assembling the so decoded symbology into a stream of decoded data.

16.(currently amended) The symbology scanning process of claim 15, wherein; there are four CCD cameras each disposed to capture ~~a quarter of the~~ encoded symbology from a quarter of the articles.

17.(previously presented) The symbology scanning process of claim 16, wherein; the encoded symbology is different for each article with encoded symbology.

18.(currently amended) The symbology process of claim [[5]] 13, wherein; the articles to be encoded are test tubes or vials and are disposed in a predetermined array in a rack.

**Insert the following new claims:**

19.(new) An encoded symbology scanner for scanning the encoded symbology on a number of articles each of which carries encoded symbology , comprising:

- (a) support means for the symbology scanner for receiving a number of articles upon which symbology has been encoded;
- (b) imaging means disposed to simultaneously image all of the encoded symbology from all the said number of articles when so received by said support means; and
- (c) decoding means for decoding the encoded symbology images.

20.(new) The encoded symbology scanner of claim 19, wherein; there are four CCD camera means each disposed to capture a quarter of the encoded symbology.

21.(new) The encoded symbology scanner of claim 19, wherein: the articles to be encoded are test tubes or vials disposed in a predetermined array in a rack.

22.(new) A process for scanning encoded symbology from a number of articles upon which symbology has been encoded, comprising:

- (a) positioning a plurality of articles upon which symbology has been encoded for simultaneous imaging;
- (b) simultaneously imaging all of the encoded symbology for all of the plurality of articles so positioned; and
- (c) decoding the encoded symbology images.

23.(new) The symbology scanning process of claim 22, wherein: there are four CCD cameras each disposed to capture encoded symbology from a quarter of the articles so positioned.

24.(new) The symbology process of claim 22 wherein: the articles to be encoded are test tubes or vials and are disposed in a predetermined array in a rack.